

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 as follows (see the accompanying "Marked-Up" version pursuant to § 1.121):

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1. (Amended) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 3 further comprising a sequence that encodes a functional NRIF3 nuclear hormone receptor co-activator, wherein the NRIF3 binds in a ligand dependent manner to thyroid hormone receptor (TR) and retinoid X receptor (RXR), but does not interact with retinoic acid receptor (RAR), vitamin D receptor (VDR), progesterone receptor (PR), glucocorticoid receptor (GR), and estrogen receptor (ER) in a yeast two hybrid assay system or *in vitro*, or both, which polypeptide contains an LXXIL (SEQ ID NO:2) module in its C-terminal domain.

2. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a sequence that encodes an amino acid sequence consisting of SEQ ID NO:4 (Figure 2).

3. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence comprising a nucleotide sequence consisting of SEQ ID NO:3 (Figure 2).

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4. (Amended) A vector comprising the nucleic acid<sup>sequence</sup> according to claim 3, wherein said<sup>nucleic acid</sup> sequence is operatively associated with an expression control sequence.

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